

Impressionism and Monet

by Adrian Tennant

Section/Subject: ESP bank - CLiL, Art and History of Art

Topic: Impressionism and Monet

Level: Low intermediate +

Target age: Teenagers / adults

Time (approx): Activity 1: 10-20 minutes
Activity 2: 15 minutes
Activity 3: 20 minutes

Preparation: Activities 1 and 2: One photocopy of Worksheet 1 for each student or one OHT sheet to be displayed. You will also need a selection of Impressionist paintings (see notes under Procedure).

Activity 3: One photocopy of Worksheet 2a and 2b for each pair of students.

Note: These activities are suitable for students who don't know much at all (possible nothing at all) about Impressionism.

Procedure

Activity 1

- 1 Write *Art* on the board and ask your students what they know about art. Can they name any particular types or 'schools' of art e.g. *Impressionism, Cubism, Modernism* etc.
- 2 If any students come up with *Impressionism*, ask them what they can tell you about it. Put the students in groups and show them a selection of paintings by the likes of Monet, Degas and Renoir. Alternatively, have students research Impressionism on the Internet. See the list of useful websites at the end.
- 3 Hand out Worksheet 1 to the groups, or display the questions on an OHT or on the board.
- 4 Ask the groups to discuss the questions together. Monitor and help when necessary.
- 5 Finally, have a class discussion asking students to report back on their group discussion.

Activity 2

- 1 Ask students to read through the text for Activity 2 and then decide if the sentences (1-7) are True (T) or False (F).
- 2 Put students in pairs and have them check their answers together.
- 3 Monitor and help where necessary.
- 4 Check as a class.

Key

1. T; 2. F; 3. F; 4. F; 5. T; 6. T; 7. F

Activity 3

- 1 Divide the class into two groups: A and B.
- 2 Give each student A Worksheet 2a and each student B Worksheet 2b.
- 3 Tell them to read through their worksheet and then write seven questions to try and find the missing information.
- 4 Monitor and check their questions.
- 5 Now pair up each student from group A with one from group B.
- 6 Tell them to take it in turns to ask and answer the questions using their worksheets and complete the missing information (encourage them not to show the information).
- 7 Check and discuss.

Key

Claude Monet was one of the most important *Impressionist* artists. He was born on (1) November 14, 1840 in (2) Paris, but at the age of (3) five moved to (4) Le Havre. His father was a (5) grocer and wanted Claude to take over the family business. However, Claude wanted to be an artist. When he was (6) 16 his mother died and he went to live with his (7) aunt in Paris. He often

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visited (8) the Louvre, but instead of copying the paintings there he would sit at the window and paint what he saw.

At the age of (9) 21 Monet (10) joined the French army and went to Algeria. After two years he returned to Paris and began painting. Then, in 1870 he moved to (11) England where he studied the paintings of two English greats – Turner and Constable. Both of these artists gave Monet a lot of inspiration. In (12) 1872 he returned to France and painted *Impression, Sunrise*. It is from this painting that the *Impressionist* movement got its name. Monet died, at the age of (13) 86, in (14) 1926.

Useful websites

www.bbc.co.uk/arts/multimedia/impressionism/
www.wetcanvas.com/Museum/Impressionists/index.html
www.artchive.com/74nadar.htm
www.impressionism.org/
www.impressionism.org/teachimpress/default.htm
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impressionism
www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/monet/
www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/manet/
www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/degas/

These fantastic sites tell you all you need to know about Impressionism, at least to start with. All the sites include examples of paintings by all the leading Impressionist artists.

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Activity 1

Your teacher will show you some pictures. Look at the pictures and discuss these questions in groups.

1. Do you like any of the pictures?
2. Which ones do you like? Why?
3. Which ones don't you like? Why?
4. Why do you think they are called *Impressionist*?

Activity 2

In the 1860s in France the most famous art exhibition was at the Salon de Paris. This exhibition was organized by the Academy of Art. Traditionally, art was painted in studios, but a group of young artists started painting outside. They decided that it was easier for them to 'capture the moment' by actually painting what they saw. They painted using quick, thick brush strokes and didn't blend colours. Instead they put colours side by side and allowed the person looking at the painting to get the impression of the natural scene. In 1874 the group had their first exhibition in a private gallery. The art critics hated the paintings and attacked the artists. One painting, in particular, was given very bad reviews and it was from the title of this painting – Monet's *Impression, Sunrise* – that the movement got its name. Luckily for the artists, the public loved their paintings and now paintings by artists such as Monet, Renoir, Degas and Cézanne are famous around the world.

Read the text. Are these sentences *True (T)* or *False (F)*?

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. There were art exhibitions at the Salon de Paris. | T / F |
| 2. Most painters liked to work outside. | T / F |
| 3. The impressionists mixed their paints to make their paintings look natural. | T / F |
| 4. The first impressionist exhibition was in the Salon de Paris. | T / F |
| 5. The art critics didn't like the paintings. | T / F |
| 6. The <i>Impression, Sunrise</i> was painted by Monet. | T / F |
| 7. Most people agreed with the art critics. | T / F |

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Student A

Claude Monet was one of the most important *Impressionist* artists. He was born on (1) _____ in Paris, but at the age of five moved to (4) _____. His father was a (5) _____ and wanted Claude to take over the family business. However, Claude wanted to be an artist. When he was (6) _____ his mother died and he went to live with his aunt in Paris. He often visited (8) _____, but instead of copying the paintings there he would sit at the window and paint what he saw.

At the age of 21 Monet (10) _____ and went to Algeria. After two years he returned to Paris and began painting. Then, in 1870 he moved to England where he studied the paintings of two English greats – Turner and Constable. Both of these artists gave Monet a lot of inspiration. In 1872 he returned to France and painted *Impression, Sunrise*. It is from this painting that the *Impressionist* movement got its name. Monet died, at the age of (13) _____, in 1926.

Questions

- (1) When _____ ?
- (4) Where _____ ?
- (5) What _____ ?
- (6) How old _____ ?
- (8) Where _____ ?
- (10) What _____ ?
- (13) How old _____ ?

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Student B

Claude Monet was one of the most important *Impressionist* artists. He was born on November 14, 1840 in (2) _____, but at the age of (3) _____ moved to Le Havre. His father was a grocer and wanted Claude to take over the family business. However,

Claude wanted to be an artist. When he was 16 his mother died and he went to live with his (7) _____ in Paris. He often visited the Louvre, but instead of copying the paintings there he would sit at the window and paint what he saw.

At the age of (9) _____ Monet joined the French army and went to Algeria. After two years he returned to Paris and began painting. Then, in 1870 he moved to (11) _____ where he studied the paintings of two English greats – Turner and Constable. Both of these artists gave Monet a lot of inspiration. In (12) _____ he returned to France and painted *Impression, Sunrise*. It is from this painting that the *Impressionist* movement got its name. Monet died, at the age of 86, in (14) _____.

Questions

- (2) Where _____ ?
- (3) How old _____ ?
- (7) Who _____ ?
- (9) How old _____ ?
- (11) Where _____ ?
- (12) When _____ ?
- (14) When _____ ?